

REMARKS

Summary

Claims 1-5 were pending. Claim 2 has been cancelled and Claims 1 and 3 rewritten. No new matter has been added as a result of this amendment.

Rejection of Claims

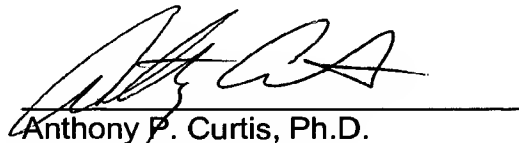
In the Office Action, Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's Admitted Prior Art (AAPA) in view of Yamamoto (U.S. Patent 5,978,663). Claims 2-5 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim but the Examiner indicated they would be allowable if rewritten in an independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants traverse the rejection. Nevertheless, Applicants have rewritten Claim 1 to incorporate the elements of Claim 2 and cancelled Claim 2 to expedite prosecution. Applicants thus submit that pending Claims 1 and 3-5 are in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

In view of the amendments above, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance and seek an allowance thereof. If for any reason, the Examiner is unable to allow the application in the next Office Action and believes that a telephone interview would be helpful to resolve any remaining issues, he is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AP Curtis', is written over a horizontal line.

Anthony P. Curtis, Ph.D.
Registration No. 46,193
Agent for Applicants

BRINKS HOFER GILSON & LIONE
P.O. BOX 10395
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60610
(312) 321-4200